

## Today's News - Thursday, February 16, 2012

EDITOR'S NOTE: Our apologies for not posting yesterday - we were without power most of the morning, but all's well now (so far, anyway...).

- Westcott pays tribute to "the most inventive, dogged, and systematically intelligent member" of the Metabolist movement.
- Chaban digs deep into what happened to the high hopes for Obama's urban agenda: "Even the administration's staunchest supporters struggle to find much to brag about."
- Berg tools around Vancouver with the city's now-ousted planning director who, though the odds were against him from the start, remains optimistic.
- Architectural historian Massey explores how the housing crisis, OWS, and the 99% personify "the national unease about deepening economic inequality and the waning of the American dream."
- On a brighter note, Mays is amazed by a housing project for formerly homeless in Toronto "that has been largely shaped by ordinary citizens mobilized on behalf of the public good" that is a lesson in "citizenship and commitment to old-fashioned city-building...it could be social architecture of a high order."
- Dvir tries to find something good to say about a massive new hospital tower that "brutally changes the West Jerusalem horizon" (though he does like the interiors); residents will just "have to get used to it," sayeth the architect.
- A zoning mandate to include arts spaces in Washington, DC's downtown office buildings sounds good on paper, but it's more like a "shotgun marriage" with property managers seeing it as a "poison pill," and the arts scene often hard to find.
- Krier decries Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial (what took him so long?): Modernism is "a theory that has been brain-dead for half a century," and the "Gehry style is a century old; it seems 'innovative' only to the ignorant" (and so it goes...).
- OMA's plan for a Venice palazzo on the Grand Canal has preservationists up in arms.
- A study shows the Battersea Power Station is worth more dead and flattened than alive.
- A fascinating reassessment of Arcosanti: the new director's first job is "to remind the world that it exists as a going concern" and not just "a historical curiosity"; has it lived up to its potential? "No. Don't be silly," Soleri said, and then laughed."
- New research shows increased injury rates on LEED projects, and offers suggestions to mitigate some (though we're a bit confused by "perceived" risk percentages).
- Abu Dhabi approves new Yas Island master plan for a waterfront community of up to 55,000: "good 'walkability' is a key factor in the design."
- A jury picks Foster for Patna Museum project in India, but the government is "reluctant to proceed because of the size of the architect's fee"; the contract might go to Maki, who placed second.
- The 7th Annual Palm Springs Modernism Week kicks off today (wish we could be there!).
- We couldn't resist: Moby's new architecture blog: "We Angelenos are going to have to teach him why this is strictly against code...please, keep telling your New York friends that it's a vacuous hellhole with no charms."
- Call for entries: Considering the Quake: Seismic Design on the Edge: projects and research for an exhibit at Toronto's Design Exchange.

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Obituary: Kiyonori Kikutake, 1928-2011: James Westcott reflects on the life and work of a leader of the Metabolist movement: ...the most inventive, dogged, and systematically intelligent member...[his] high-tech projects looked utopian...but they were in fact dystopian preparations for worst-case scenarios. -- Kenzo Tange; Kisho Kurokawa; Noboru Kawazoe; Kenji Ekuo; Fumihiko Maki [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

Obama to Cities: Drop Dead—the Life and Death of a Great American Urban Policy: Even the administration's staunchest supporters struggle to find much to brag about...the president may be urban America's greatest hope in almost a century, but that does not mean he will be able to transform it. By Matt Chaban -- Adolfo Carrion; Ed Blakely; Shaun Donovan; Edward Glaeser - New York Observer

Exit Interview: Brent Toderian, Vancouver's Ousted Planning Director: ...has specific ideas about how cities can and could work...The narrative of an anti-developer planning director coming into town...replacing two well-liked and well-established co-directors, Larry Beasley and Dr. Ann McAfee, made his new job...a challenge from before the start. By Nate Berg - The Atlantic Cities

Housing and the 99 Percent: Occupy Wall Street and We Are the 99% have spread rapidly, capturing and personifying the national unease about deepening economic inequality and the waning of the American dream...how housing — along with the various governmental and banking policies — has worked to reflect and mediate, to promote and endanger that dream. By Jonathan Massey [images] - Places Journal

In Regent Park, a building to suit the community: ...a residential scheme that has been largely shaped by ordinary citizens mobilized on behalf of the public good...the 87-unit housing complex known as 40 Oaks...modern and urbane...has less to do with art than with citizenship and commitment to old-fashioned city-building...it could be social architecture of a high order. By John Bentley Mays -- Charles Rosenberg/Ken DeWaal/Hilditch Architect; Public Displays of Affection - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Hadassah University Hospital is taking health care to new heights: ...huge new tower brutally changes the West Jerusalem horizon...In contrast to Joseph Neufeld's pragmatic approach...has no connection to the scale or delicate lines of the natural surroundings..."This is a new scale in the area and the inhabitants will have to get used to it." By Noam Dvir -- HKS; Spector-Amisar Architects; Shlomo Aronson Architects [image] - Ha'aretz (Israel)

Art losing its toehold in downtown Washington: ...arts spaces are mandated by zoning, yet the arts scene is hard to find...makes for friction between the arts community and property managers managing expensive real estate...Some view the arts requirement as "a poison pill"...The shotgun marriage of galleries and upscale office tenants has not produced a boom in sales... - Washington Post

Eisenhower Memorial, Washington, D.C.: That Frank Gehry is a great artist I have no doubt, but talent and determination are no warrant against confusion, nor are they a guaranty to produce great art...was appointed by a commission who shares his intellectual confusion and distaste of a classical Washington, D.C...The Gehry style is a century old; it seems "innovative" only to the ignorant. By Leon Krier [images] - Metropolis Magazine

Conservationists mount legal challenge to OMA plan for Venice palazzo Fondaco dei Tedeschi: Benetton wants to turn 16th-century palazzo into department store...The scheme, near the Rialto bridge, includes a roof terrace and a retractable escalator taking shoppers up to higher levels. -- Rem Koolhaas; Ippolito Pestellini Laparelli [images] - BD/Building Design (UK)

Battersea Power Station site 'worth £470m more if chimneys knocked down': ...West London site is more likely to be revitalised if a developer is allowed to start from scratch...research says flattening Europe's largest brick structure and its four chimneys would save estimated renovation costs of about £500m, roughly equivalent to the cost of demolition and apartment construction combined. -- Giles Gilbert Scott - Telegraph (UK)

An Early Eco-City Faces the Future: Reassessing Arcosanti, an "urban laboratory" in the Arizona desert...Jeff Stein's first job, perhaps, is to become an ambassador: to remind the world that Arcosanti exists as a going concern...Has [it] lived up to its potential? "No. Don't be silly," Soleri said, and then laughed. -- Paolo Soleri; Cosanti Foundation [slide show] - New York Times

[New Research Reveals the Safety Hazards of Green Building: When Matthew Hallowell...at the University of Colorado Boulder, became aware of a study that found evidence of a nearly 50% increase of injury rate had occurred in LEED-certified projects over traditional construction, he found himself wondering about the cause.](#) - [Architectural Record](#)

[Abu Dhabi approves new Yas Island masterplan: ...new 680 hectare waterfront community of up to 55,000 inhabitants...communities linked by a comprehensive open space, road, light rapid transport, pedestrian and cycle network to other notable destinations on the island, with good 'walkability' a key factor in the design.](#) -- [Broadway Malyan](#)- [TradeArabia Business News](#)

[Indian museum picks Foster + Partners as preferred architect: But the jury and the state government fail to see eye-to-eye on cost of Patna Museum plan...reluctant to proceed...because of the size of the architect's fee. The contract could, therefore, go to the runner-up, Maki & Associates.](#) -- [Coop Himmelb\(l\)au](#); [Snøhetta](#); [Daniel Libeskind](#)- [The Art Newspaper \(UK\)](#)

[7th Annual Palm Springs Modernism Week February 16–26: An 11-day celebration of mid-century modern design, architecture and culture.](#) [[links to images, info](#)]- [Palm Springs Sun](#)

[Moby is leaking L.A.'s secrets on his new architecture blog: ...giving away our best secrets...We Angelenos are going to have to teach him why this is strictly against code...please, keep telling your New York friends that it's a vacuous hellhole with no charms. That's how we keep it \(relatively\) cheap around here.](#) - [Los Angeles Times](#)

[Call for entries: Considering the Quake: Seismic Design on the Edge: Effie Bouras and Ghyslaine McClure of McGill University, Department of Civil Engineering, are seeking projects and research...for an exhibit at Design Exchange in Toronto Sept/Oct 2012; deadline: June 1-](#) [DXDesign Exchange \(Toronto\)](#)

[INSIGHT: Bringing Art to the Streets without Breaking the Bank: An architect explains how he used innovative materials and a close-knit alliance of stakeholders to create an economical yet artful amenity for a city's public transit passengers.](#) By [Walter Geiger](#), [AIA](#), [FARA](#)- [ArchNewsNow](#)



[Richard Meier & Partners x 2: Villa Gardone, Gardone Riviera, Italy + Mitikah Office Tower, Mexico City](#)

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